Home Office

Summary Proof of Evidence of William Round

Senior Responsible Owner
Immigration Removal Centre Expansion Programme
Haslar Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) Phase 2

Crown Development Application CROWN/2026/0000005

October 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 My name is [redacted]. I have been the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for the Immigration Removal Centre Expansion Programme (IRCEP) since 20 May 2024.

1.2 I have personal responsibility for delivery of the build phases at Campsfield and Haslar, including the Operating Service Provider contracts for both sites. The Programme forms part of the Government Major Projects Portfolio[1].

1.3 The evidence which I have prepared and provide in my proof of evidence is true and I confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions.

2. THE IMMIGRATION REMOVAL CENTRE EXPANSION PROGRAMME

2.1 Detention capacity is a critical long-term constraint within the wider returns system. Haslar phase 2 is an essential component of the approved IRCEP programme and would provide 470 places towards the approved requirement for an additional 1,000 detention places. It is not discretionary capacity that could be removed without affecting the programme's intended benefits.

3. ROLE OF IMMIGRATION DETENTION

3.1 IRCs form part of the infrastructure supporting the immigration and returns system, allowing individuals to be detained safely and securely while their cases are progressed and, where appropriate, removal arrangements are completed. Sufficient capacity enables the Home Office to carry out its statutory responsibilities and maintain operational resilience.

4. DEMAND / NEED

4.1 The immigration detention estate has an overall capacity of approximately 2,600 beds, but the number of beds in commission is typically lower, reflecting routine operational requirements, maintenance activity, estate management considerations and the need to maintain operational flexibility across the detention estate.

4.2 The Department's assessment indicates a sustained gap between the effective operational capacity available across the detention estate and current and forecast demand. Where suitable capacity is unavailable, the Home Office's ability to detain individuals pending removal is constrained, limiting its ability to enforce immigration law effectively and achieve its public protection goals.

5. ASSURANCE OF NEED

5.1 The requirement for additional capacity has been tested repeatedly at ministerial, departmental and cross-government level. It is an approved and assured government requirement, rather than an assumption developed solely to support this planning application.

6. ALTERNATIVE SITES AND CAPACITY OPTIONS

6.1 The Home Office assessed delivery options against operational effectiveness, deliverability, value for money, programme timescales, Government ownership or control of land, existing infrastructure, site constraints and operational suitability. Campsfield and Haslar offered the most credible combination of established use, infrastructure, operational suitability, pace and deliverability.

[1] Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) Expansion programme appointment letter for Will Round, January 2025 (accessible) - GOV.UK

6.2 A comprehensive assessment of potential alternatives did not identify any suitable site capable of delivering Haslar's planned contribution within the required timeframe, with an equivalent level of operational suitability, deliverability and certainty. New sites, temporary accommodation or other parts of the Government estate were rejected or deprioritised because of disadvantages relating to security requirements, availability, scale, location, operational complexity or delivery time.

7. CONSEQUENCES OF NON-DELIVERY

7.1 This expansion is critical to strengthen detention capacity, enabling more enforced returns, including of Foreign National Offenders, and individuals with no lawful right to remain, thereby supporting public safety, border integrity and the resilience of the immigration system. If the 470 places proposed at Haslar Phase 2 are not delivered, a material part of the identified detention capacity requirement would remain unmet. This would reduce planned capacity and resilience across the detention estate, limit the ability to accommodate operational and refurbishment pressures, and reduce the benefits expected from the phased redevelopment of Haslar.

8. WELFARE, VULNERABILITY AND SAFEGUARDING

8.1 Additional capacity does not change the individual legal and policy tests governing whether a person may be detained. Each decision continues to be made on its own facts and kept under review. The welfare and rights of detained individuals are safeguarded through a comprehensive framework of legislation, published policy and operational standards, including the Detention Centre Rules 2001[2], the Adults at Risk policy[3] and published detention guidance[4]. These safeguards apply when an individual is first considered for detention and throughout their time in an IRC.

8.2 IRCs are monitored by Independent Monitoring Boards, inspected by HM Inspectorate of Prisons and subject to wider operational and contractual assurance processes. The Home Office has undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for Haslar, and the proposed development has been designed to provide a safe, secure and appropriate environment for those accommodated there.

9. PROTEST ACTIVITY AND OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

9.1 Haslar IRC has historically attracted public interest and protest activity has occurred at IRCs across the detention estate. The Home Office has established operational procedures, security measures and multi-agency arrangements to manage such activity safely. The IRC is designed to operate as a self-contained facility, with appropriate healthcare, welfare, catering, recreational and other services provided on site. Individuals detained under immigration powers are detained within the secure centre and are not permitted to leave to access the local area or local services. Haslar will therefore not place additional demand on local services, although occasional access to emergency or specialist healthcare may be clinically necessary. The IRC also incorporates robust physical security measures. Its operation is therefore not expected to place additional pressure on local facilities or give rise to unacceptable impacts on the surrounding community.

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[2] Detention Centre Rules 2001

[3] Adults at risk in immigration detention (accessible) - GOV.UK

[4] Detention: general instructions (accessible) - GOV.UK

10. In my view as SRO, Haslar Phase 2 is a necessary and deliverable component of the approved expansion programme. It would address an identified long-term capacity constraint while operating within the established safeguards for those detained.

[redacted]

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